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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT Polish-Soviet Frontier Area: PGR Conditions/Transportation/Towns of Ketrzyn and Węgorzewo

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1. "The following information dates up to the summer of 1953:
2. "The Polish-Soviet frontier line was drawn without any consideration to geographical, historical or economic factors. Consequently, in many places no railway or highway communications are in existence, and only muddy and rugged side roads connect these places with the outside world. This holds true for the area north of Ketrzyn and Węgorzewo where the frontier line now crosses through East Prussia parallel to the Wandlaken-Nordenburg and Angerapp railway line.
3. "There is a wire fence running along the Polish-Soviet frontier, and the border is rigidly guarded by the WOP on the Polish side and a special Soviet Army detachment on the Soviet side.

General Security Measures

4. "Control over the inhabitants in the Polish-Soviet frontier area is much stricter than elsewhere. At night, for instance, no light is visible from dwellings. It is strictly forbidden to move around with flashlights in the frontier-belt. All inhabitants are pretty much under the control of WOP patrols. It is not a rare event to have special searching parties arrive at houses during the night, who wake people up to check their documents and to search their houses to find out whether anyone is staying in this area without the proper credentials.

PGR Conditions

5. "As there are many State-owned PGRs in this area, workers have to obtain special passes to work outside their normal places of residence. (In conformity with PGR practices, quite often workers from one PGR are loaned out to other PGRs during a season.) Such special passes are valid only for two weeks. Even one day over the expiration date without renewal can cause a worker's arrest.

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6. "A large majority of localities directly situated on the frontier line are not inhabited at all. People working on such frontier State farms have to leave these estates after work to spend the night on other PGRs situated behind the frontier line. Among such places is Brzezina (German: Birkenfelde) or Zielone Bajory (German: Blankenfelde). [The only place name which can be found in the NIS Gazetteer is Birkenfeld (Germany)]. People working there live on the Kalki PGR (German: Sechserbez) and go daily to the frontier area.
 7. "The PGR administrators are having extreme difficulties in finding laborers in this area. People just do not like to live in this dead part of the country where they are under around-the-clock control and where there are no cultural facilities whatsoever. During the course of a year, the PGR personnel is constantly shifting.
 8. "Furthermore, PGR labor is underpaid, as only some specialists (particularly experts on the mechanization of agricultural production) receive more decent wages. On the average, 400 to 500 zlotys per month is the normal wage. Even though PGR laborers are permitted to cultivate and farm their own small land holdings, 500 zlotys per month is a very modest income, as they are obliged to turn in a large quota of their farm products in enforced deliveries to the State.
 9. "The number of PGRs in this area outranks by far the number of kolkhozes or villages with individual farmers. PGRs in this area specialize in grain cultivation and in sugar beets, which are then transported for reprocessing in the local food industries.
- Transportation Conditions
10. "Transportation conditions have improved only slightly since World War II. For example, the Ketrzyn-Barciany (German: Rastenburg-Barten) highway was partly renovated last year [1952] by the construction of a concrete lane in the middle of the road, wide enough for one vehicle. This peculiar type of lane system is used quite frequently now on second-grade highways in order to mitigate the traffic problem. Another highway between Barciany and Srokow [Srokowo?] (German: between Barten and Drengfurt) is presently [1953] under the same type of reconstruction.
 11. "The narrow-gauge branch railway line which connected Ketrzyn with localities farther north was partly dismantled during the Soviet offensive in 1944. Up to the present [1953], this line has not been replaced. Because of the new Polish-Soviet frontier line, many localities are without normal railway facilities, and only by using the rather inefficient autobus net are people living in these places able to reach the railways.

Ketrzyn

Industries

12. "The main town in this area is Ketrzyn. It was only slightly damaged during World War II. Except for the former German barracks in the northern section of the town, the town is nearly unscathed. About 10,000 inhabitants are living in Ketrzyn at present. They are working in the few industrial enterprises located there, such as the sugar plant in the southeastern suburb which during a season employs up to 700 workers. [See map of Ketrzyn available at the CIA Map Library.] The second largest factory is located at the northern end of the town at the end of Kalki Street. All kinds of sporting goods are manufactured here. Approximately 400 workers are employed in the factory.
13. "There is a large brewery employing 300 employees on Traugutta Street. (Another large brewery which was situated in the northwestern part of Ketrzyn was damaged and has not been rebuilt.) There is a yeast factory on Szopena Street. The above-mentioned factories, together with five flour mills, are the only enterprises worth noting in Ketrzyn.

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School for WOP Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers

14. "A school for WOP officers and non-commissioned officers has been established in the former German barracks situated on the western end of Stalina Street (formerly named 'General Sikorskiego Street' and renamed after Stalin's death). [See map of Ketrzyn available at the CIA Map Library]. It is said that there is one course for officers which takes three years. It is estimated that at the present time [1953] there are approximately 1000 soldiers attending the various courses offered by the school. Opposite the barracks there is a large garden with buildings accommodating the officers' quarters, the motor pool and the officers' club. This club has been the scene of many disturbances between soldiers and civilian guests. It frequently occurs that civilian guests, having been invited to a dance at the club, arrive to find the club closed. The soldiers close down the club as revenge for trouble they have encountered in the civilian dance halls.

Military Airfield

15. "There is a military airfield strip near the town which was finished in 1952. It is situated somewhere halfway between Ketrzyn and Martiany (German: Maertenheim), a village located on the railway line connecting Ketrzyn with Gizycko (German: Loetzen). The southern end of the airfield strip is about 300 meters away from the railway line. 25X1 it is probably south of the small settlement of Owczarki (German: Schaeferrei). When this airfield strip was finished in the first half of 1952, two concrete runways had been built. Ten to twelve double-decker [planes?] have been observed on the field. During the day, a number of pilots can be seen roaming around Ketrzyn. This year [1953], no planes have been seen on the airfield strip, but it is said that it is kept in condition for continual use.

Warehouses

16. "There are some warehouses located east of Ketrzyn. On a small farm near Kruszewiec (German: Krausendorf Vorwerk), grain storehouses were fixed up for storing purposes after the harvest was in. A special detachment of industrial police was formed in Ketrzyn to guard these warehouses.
17. "Ketrzyn being encircled by PGRs, there are some institutions set up for the benefit of the PGR personnel. In the suburb of Karolewo (German: Karlshof), a vocational agricultural school has been established in a former infirmary. Here specialists are trained and prepared for the PGRs. There are courses in general gardening, land-cultivation, horticulture, breeding, mechanization, use of tractors, etc. The courses take from one to two years. A horse-breeding operation, situated in its pre-war location, takes place in the town itself. During the winter, at least 150 stud horses are in the stables of the horse-breeding institute; in the summer these horses are allocated to the various PGRs.

Wegorzewo

18. "The town of Wegorzewo (German: Angerburg), which is near Ketrzyn and suffered more than 50% damage during World War II, is serving as one of the main centers for the East Prussian lakes fishing industry. The refrigerated storehouses are in part of the courtyard of the former castle (which was badly damaged during the war).
19. "Also in Wegorzewo is a district workshop for agricultural machinery and a so-called POM station - a State-controlled station for lending out agricultural machines and tools.
20. "Situated on the southeastern outskirts of Wegorzewo are some renovated barracks which house a small detachment of military forces.
21. "Wegorzewo is also surrounded by many PGRs. The PGR head office is in the town itself. The Stulichy (German: Stullichen) and Wilkowo (German: Geroldswalde) PGRs come under the management of this head office."

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a map of Ketrzyn drawn to a scale of 1:12,500. The following legend applies:

1. Railway station
2. Gas power station
3. "Purification" and "clearing" installations
4. Slaughterhouse
5. Hospital
6. Market place (rynek)
7. Wolnosci Place
8. Grunwaldski Place
9. Athletic fields
10. School and "children's house"
11. Agricultural Professional school in Karolewo
12. Factory for manufacture of sporting goods
13. Brewery
14. Sugar plant
15. Brewery which was damaged during World War II and not rebuilt
16. Brick factory damaged during the war and not rebuilt
17. Water tower
18. Barracks of officers' and non-commissioned officers' school
19. Officers' billets and officers' club
20. Pre-World War II military barracks which were bombed out during the war and not rebuilt
21. UB and MO offices (Security and Police offices)
22. Grain storehouses in Kruszewiec
23. State-run horse-breeding stables
24. Coal reserves
25. Sawmill
26. TOR workshops (Techniczna Obsluga Rolnictwa-Technical Aid Station for Agriculture)

Note: Red marks indicate military installations.

Green marks indicate agricultural installations.

Red crosses indicate installations which have been damaged and not rebuilt and are not in operation.

To borrow map call - code 143, ext. 2596. Map call number - 84835-R.7

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